

**Francis Preston Blair to Andrew Jackson, May 24, 1842,
from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by
John Spencer Bassett.**

class=MsoNormal>FRANCIS P. BLAIR TO JACKSON.

Washington, May 24, 1842.

My Dear General: I had the pleasure today of seeing Mr. Dodge who brought with him the best likeness of you I have ever seen. ¹ It almost made me feel as if I had stepped into your private chamber, as I used to do at the White House and you had just raised your kind look of welcome upon me. I was delighted to find you so little altered by the five years that have brought you to Seventy five. And although Mr. Dodge tells me your strength is greatly impaired, yet when I remember that you were so feeble when you left Washington, that no one believed you could ever reach the Hermitage alive, I can not but hope your strength of spirit will

¹ Dodge's portrait of Jackson was widely reproduced in its day. It is not usually considered one of the best of the Jackson portraits.

class=MsoNormal>0178 154 keep up for years to come notwithstanding the want of bodily vigor. Your life is of the soul, more than the body.

You will have observed, that the Federalists have defeated Linn's Bill returning the New Orleans fine. The proviso, taken in connexion with the Speeches made, meant nothing more than a justification of Hall and the disaffected at New Orleans, and a reaffirmation of their charges against you by an implication. It follows if they were right, you were wrong, and if by tendering the fine with one hand and with the other holding up the proviso (by which you were to get it) that no inference was to be made to the disadvantage

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of the Judge, you to give confession, at this late day, (by an act taking the money on such terms) to the criminality of your conduct. I was sure you would not touch the money proffered, coupled with the condition, and I told Linn and Benton that it ought to be voted down by our own side with any proviso whatever shielding the Judge. They did so, as you see, in the first instance. But Dr. Linn has moved a reconsideration, expecting that the Federalists will assent to the Bill without the proviso. I am afraid they (the majority) will take the opportunity, to pass the Bill with the proviso in spite of your friends, the minority. Only some three or four feds. voted against the Bill and proviso the other day, all our friends voting against it. If however they should pass the Bill with such a reflecting proviso, I am certain that, if alive, you would put a VETO on it. The federal party are now certain that the American people will soon force the surrender of this money unconditionally by the Govt. They may now while in power, pass the Bill clogged with a proviso, to prevent its certain passage hereafter without it. I think the failure of the Bill by votes of your friends, furnishes you a good occasion by a letter to some one of them approving their course, to put a strong veto on such an act in advance. Life is uncertain and you may not live to speak your mind on an act which I believe the Federalists still have some design to pass. In the event of your death while they are in power, they would be sure to do it, to save them from public indignation. I think therefore you ought to put on record your views of the Bill as coupled with the proviso.

You will have heard before this from Major Lewis about the \$10000. It cannot give you half as much satisfaction to receive as it has given me to send it. Give my love to Mrs. Jackson and the dear little ones. Eliza and Betsy join in remembrance and affection for you
Yours Sir

Yo. mo. af. Friend